

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Mohr Barn  
Other name/site number 173-0000-0131

### 2. Location

Street & number 14920 W. 21<sup>st</sup> Street North ☐ not for publication  
City or town Wichita ☒ vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Sedgwick Code 173 Zip code 672

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination  
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of  
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia Selmer DSHPO 11/8/06  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional  
Comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official /Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
--	-------------------------	----------------

- ☐ entered in the National Register. \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ See continuation sheet..
- ☐ determined eligible for the National  
Register \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ removed from the National  
Register \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property: Mohr Barn

County and State: Sedgwick County, Kansas

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)  
(Count.)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		total

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

### Previously listed in the National Register

See Continuation Sheet N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

Agriculture: animal facility

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture: animal facility

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation CONCRETE

Walls WOOD

Roof ASPHALT

Other

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property: Mohr Barn

County and State: Sedgwick County, KS

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1913-1956

### Significant Dates

1913

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Joseph Wapelhorst, builder

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS): Primary location of additional data:

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ Previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # \_\_\_\_\_

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property: Mohr Barn

County and State Sedgwick County, Kansas

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Zone	Easting	Northing
14S	630961	4176058

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Kathy L. Morgan, Senior Planner and Barbara Hammond

Organization City of Wichita Historic Preservation Office Date July 23, 2005

Street & number 455 N. Main, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Telephone 316-268-4421

City or town Wichita State Kansas Zip code 67202-1688

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

name John Strunk

street & number 14920 W 21<sup>st</sup> Street North telephone 316-796-1229

city or town Wichita state KS zip code 672

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section 7 Page 1

Mohr Barn  
Name of property

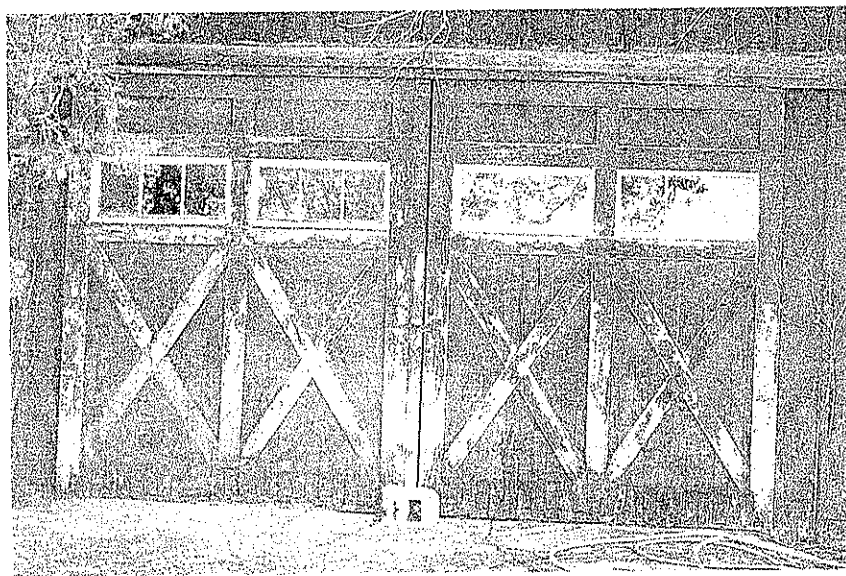
Sedgwick County, Kansas  
County and State

**Architectural Description Overview**

The wood balloon-frame barn, built in 1913, is two-and-one-half stories tall clad with vertical board and batten siding with faded red paint and white trim. The ridge of the barn runs north and south with a metal ventilator topping the ridge of the gambrel roof covered with red asphalt shingles. The barn measures approximately 40 feet wide by 60 feet long with the main entrance on the north end of the building. The eave projection on the gable ends have exposed roof braces and carved verge boards. A white wood stringcourse separates the gable end from the lower façade and curves downward as it meets the corner of the barn and the eave. The wood used in the construction of the barn is dimensional lumber.

**South Façade**

The south side of the barn faces 21<sup>st</sup> Street and sets back off the right-of-way approximately 150 feet. A sliding door opens into the center aisle of the barn. To the east of the sliding door are a four-paned window and a single Dutch door. A hinged door is located in the upper west corner of the first floor west of the central sliding door. There are three four-over-four windows in the south gable end – one central window at the gable peak and a window at the outer edges of the gable.



**West Façade**

The west side of the barn has a pair of sliding garage doors, formed by four panels of crossed lumber, each topped with a three-paned window. These doors are surrounded by vertical board and batten siding.

**North Façade**

The north side of the barn is similar to the configuration of the south side. The peak of the gable has a hay hood ornamented with carved verge boards. The hay doors in the peak of the gable slide down the gable on a metal track, allowing the doors to be operated by a single worker inside the haymow.

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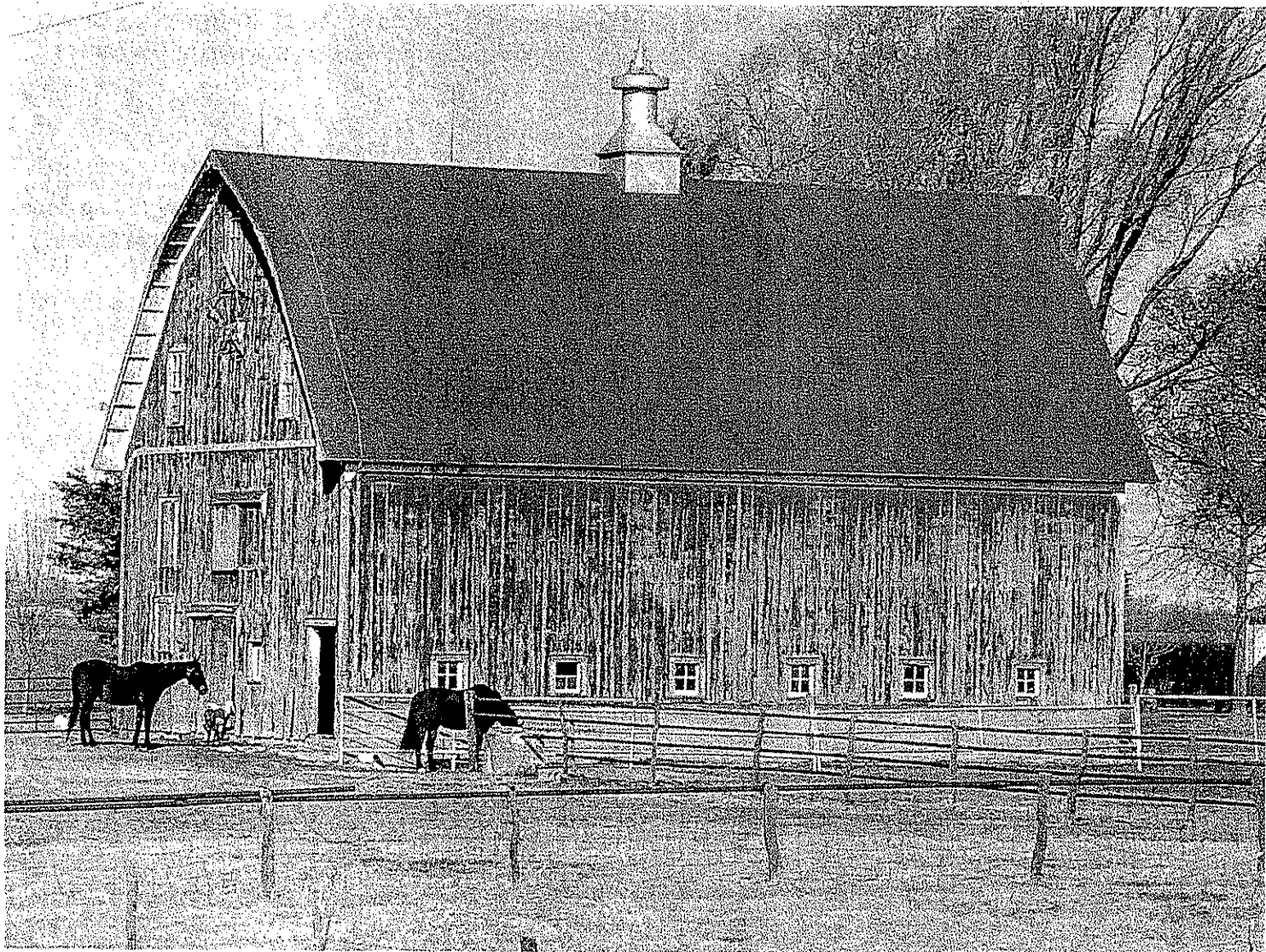
Section 7 Page 2

Mohr Barn  
Name of property

Sedgwick County, Kansas  
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**East Façade**

The east side of the barn has a concrete foundation wall, approximately three feet high that spans the length of the building. Six small, four-paned windows are placed above this concrete wall. These windows provide light to the interior livestock stalls.



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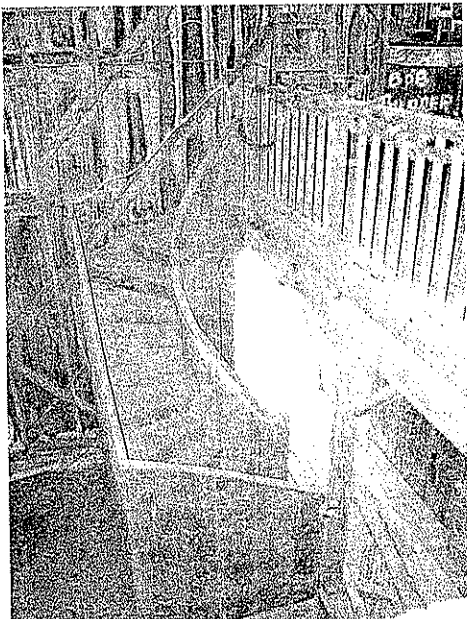
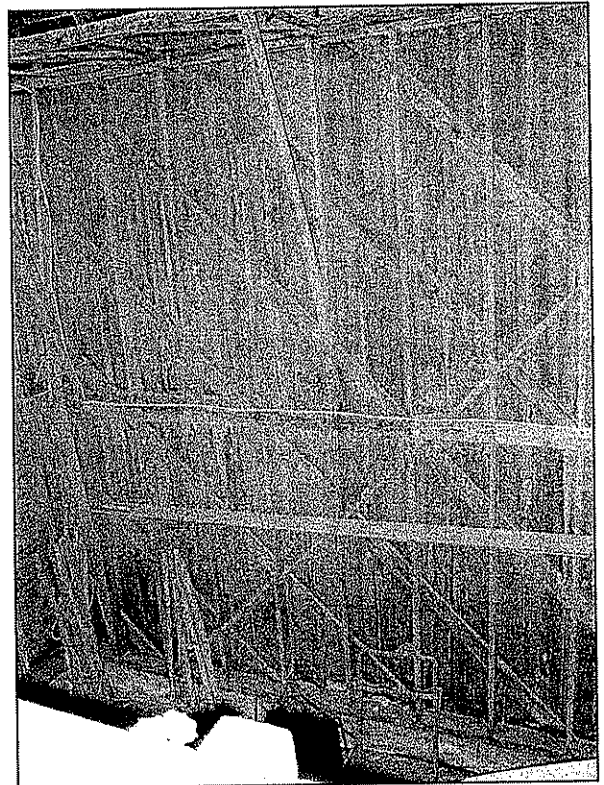
Mohr Barn  
Name of property

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**Interior**

The interior of the barn is a variation of the Midwest Three Portal barn floor plan described by Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek.<sup>1</sup> The barn contains a central aisle that runs down the length of the barn. A side aisle also runs the length of the east side and stalls are located between the two aisles. The west side of the barn houses storage spaces once used for grain and a two- buggy garage, rather than a third aisle typically be found in a three portal barn. The ground floor of the barn is concrete. The barn's interior balloon framework is stabilized with diagonal bracing (see photo at right). The upper floors and interior walls of the barn are three-inch tongue-and-groove jointed lumber.

The most unusual feature of the barn is a spiral stairway, accessed from the center aisle at the north end. This stairway has a straight outer balustrade and curved inner balustrade and leads to the open second story haymow. The attention to detail of this feature is the mark of an exceptional craftsman. This spiral staircase may be the only such flight of stairs in Kansas barns (see below).



<sup>1</sup> Allen G. Noble & Richard K. Cleek, *The Old Barn Book*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997, 21.



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Mohr Barn  
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**Statement of Significance Overview**

The Mohr Barn is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Agriculture and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The farmstead and the surrounding acres have remained intact for nearly 100 years<sup>1</sup>.

**History of the Farmstead**

The history of the Mohr farmstead is rooted in the heritage of the German immigrants that came to Sedgwick County at the end of the 19th century. The surnames of Betzen, Mohr and Strunk all frequently appear on plat maps and in census records for Attica Township and all are part of the history of this farmstead.

According to 1900 federal census records, Michial Mohr<sup>2</sup> was born in Nattenheim, Germany in 1869 and immigrated to Kansas via Pennsylvania in 1892. According to his grandson, John Strunk, Mohr lived in a hayloft for two years while working for distant relatives in Sedgwick County. Upon arriving in the area, Mohr must have soon met Peter Betzen, another immigrant from Nattenheim, and his wife, Elizabeth Eck Betzen. In 1895 or 1896, Mohr married Betzen's daughter, Marie, born in 1878. At that time, Betzen purchased the quarter section that the farmstead stands on today and mortgaged it to the young couple.<sup>3</sup>

By 1900 the farmstead and the Mohr family were well established. The couple had two children—Peter, born in 1897, and Lizzie, born in 1900. By 1910 the couple had six children—Peter, Elizabeth, John, Katherina, Margaret and Marie—and another child—Josephine—on the way. The prosperous farm was valued at \$11,000 in 1905, with the buildings worth \$900 and machinery worth \$600. The 1905 census shows that the farm had 125 acres of wheat, 80 acres of corn, 30 acres of oats and smaller areas of potatoes, sorghum and alfalfa. The farm produced 200 pounds of butter the previous year and raised poultry, cattle and hogs. The 1905 farm had four milk cows, six horses and four mules. The figures altered slightly for the 1925 farm census, with 150 acres of wheat, 35 acres of corn, 25 acres of oats and ten acres of alfalfa. Cattle, hogs and poultry were still raised on the farmstead, and two horses, three mules and one milk cow were also part of the operation. Mohr owned a cream separator in 1925, leading one to believe that a significant part of the farm's income came from the dairy trade.

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from Activity III Report Michial Mohr Farmstead, pages 7 – 10, prepared by Susan Jezak Ford with permission.

<sup>2</sup> Michial Mohr is listed in later census records as Mike Mohr and his wife, Marie, is listed as Mary.

<sup>3</sup> This explains why Peter Betzen is shown on the 1905 atlas as owner of the property. Mary Mohr is shown as the owner on 1928 and 1937 plat maps. John Strunk is shown as the owner on the 1955 plat map.



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Mohr Barn  
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Josephine Mohr was born in 1910 and married Dr. John Strunk in 1934. After the death of her husband in 1936, she and her son, John, returned home to her family's farmstead. Her son, John Strunk, Jr., born in 1935, grew up on the farm of his mother's childhood and his German grandparents.<sup>4</sup> Mike Mohr was surely an influence on his grandson, setting examples in prosperity, thriftiness and charity. Mohr assisted his six living adult children by giving each his or her own quarter section of farmland. He aided his community by helping support a local orphanage. Following World War II, he sent relief packages to his siblings in Germany. Mohr died in 1949 at the age of 80 following a long illness. He left five daughters, one son and 47 grandchildren. The farmstead passed to his daughter and then to John Strunk, who still raises wheat on the property. Josephine Strunk lived in her house until her death in 1997.

Buildings have been built and removed from the farm, a typical occurrence in the Midwest. Mike and Mary Mohr posed with five of their children for a 1908 photograph to send to relatives back in Germany (see at right). The photograph shows the completed house, a granary, a corncrib, a windmill and the farm's first barn. Only the house and windmill from the photograph are extant today. The farm's horses and carriages are also present in the photograph, showing the wealth the family had acquired.



<sup>4</sup> Josephine Strunk eventually married her husband's brother, Aloysius Strunk.

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National Park Service

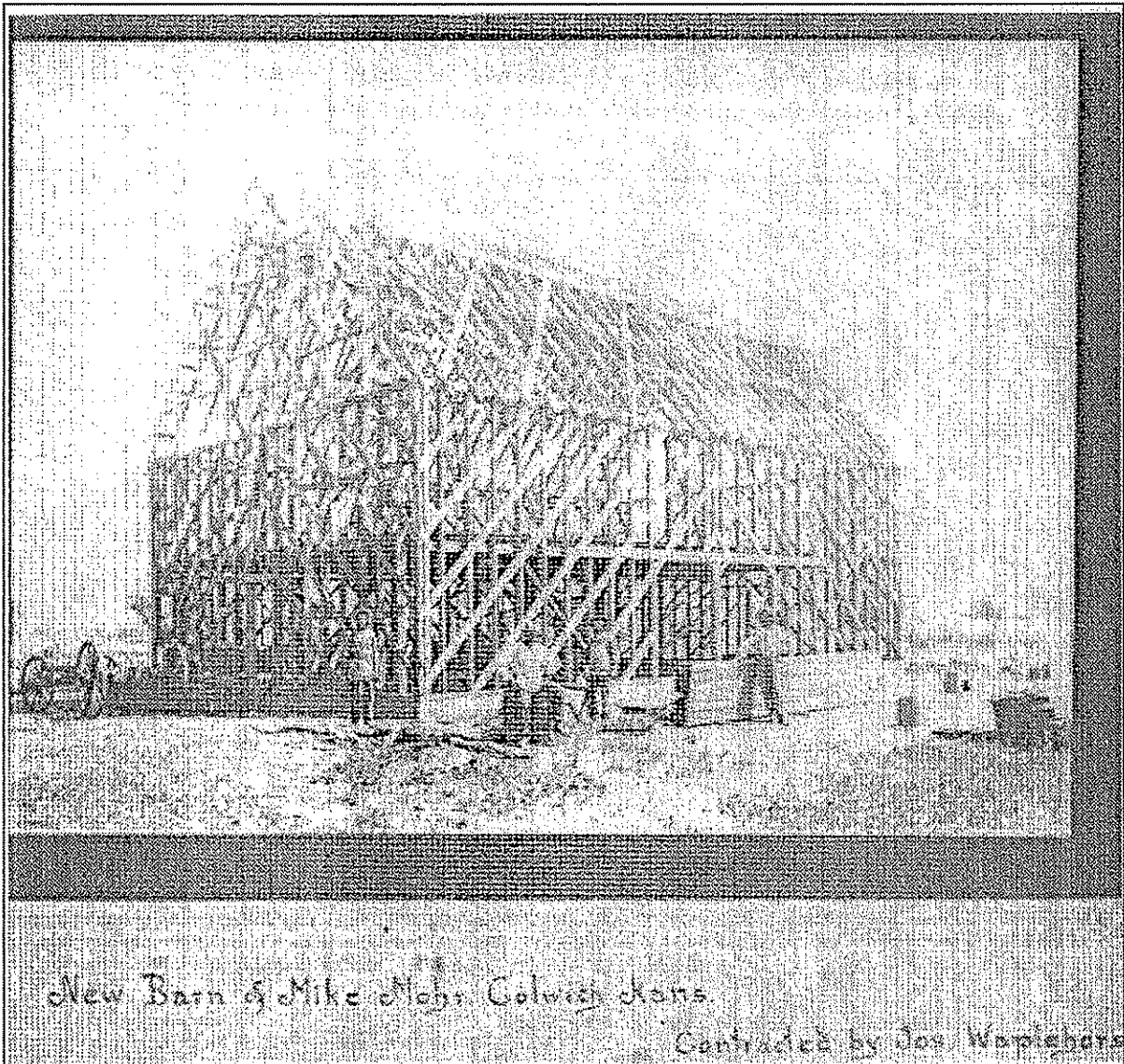
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A spectacular 1913 photograph shows the new barn under construction, undoubtedly a point of pride for the builder and the owner. The builder, Joseph Wapelhorst, was probably distantly related to the Mohrs through his marriage to Mary Strunk in 1902.



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Mohr Barn  
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**The Beginnings of Sedgwick County and Attica Township**

The history of Sedgwick County is intrinsically tied to the development of Wichita. Begun as a trading post in 1863 by J.R. Mead, the town was platted by a chartered company from Topeka in 1868 and incorporated as a village in 1870. In 1872, Wichita became the main Kansas headquarters for the Texas cattle business with the arrival of the Wichita & Southwestern Railroad. The Texas herds arrived in the town to be shipped eastward by rail. During 1872, \$2 million changed hands in the Wichita cattle market, with 350,000 head shipped in 3500 railroad cars. The town was an attraction for anyone involved with the cattle industry and soon had hotels, a post office, saloons and shops. Wichita was considered at the time the liveliest and most uproarious town between the two seas.

William Cutler's *History of the State of Kansas* extols the fertile capabilities of Sedgwick County as equally divided between bottom and upland with little timber. The black loamy soil was said to produce good crops. The 1862 Homestead Act offered free land to any adult citizen, or immigrant intending to become a citizen. This offer attracted the homesteaders that settled western Sedgwick County, including Attica Township, home of the Mohr farmstead. The first settlers came to the township in 1869. By 1873, Attica Township was well established and home to a large settlement of Germans. Goddard, St. Mark, Blendon and Colwich (named after the first syllables of Colorado and the Wichita Railroad) were all settlements within the township.

Peter Betzen was among the early settlers, arriving in Kansas via Minnesota in 1875. He came with his future father-in-law, Peter Eck, to plant the first crops and build the first house on the northeast quarter of Section 4 in Attica Township. The Betzen and Eck names (in addition to the Mohr and Strunk names) remain common in the area today.

**Architectural Significance**

Barns of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century "are characterized by a gable or later gambrel roof of varying framing techniques, few windows, square wooden cupolas, lightning rods, timber frames or modified built-up frames and doors with commercial hardware."<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the gambrel roof system represents evolving building techniques that "incorporated standardized, lightweight, machine-sawn structural members into an advanced truss configuration with nail construction."<sup>6</sup> These "modern" barns were commonly large two-story structures that housed animals and machinery on the ground floor and provided large-capacity hay storage on the second level.

With its gambrel roof design, balloon framework stabilized with diagonal bracing, and its multi-use space, the Mohr Barn reflects these trends toward modernization. The property valuations provided above further reinforce Mohr's multi-functional farm operation, which included livestock, crops, and an abundance of machinery.

<sup>5</sup> Joy E. Sears, "Barns By Mail: Pre-Cut Kit Barns By Mail-Order Catalog in the Midwest from 1900 to 1930" (Master's thesis, University of Oregon, 2001), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas C. Hubka, "The Americanization of the Barn" *Blueprints: The Journal of the National Building Museum* (Spring 1994), 2. Available at <http://www.nbm.org/blueprints/90s/spring94/page2/page2.htm>.

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Mohr Barn  
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The Mohr Barn retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship and setting. The barn's importance to the farmstead and its original owners is reinforced by its dominance and prominent setting.

**Summary**

The Mohr farmstead is a highly significant property relating to the history of Sedgwick County. The farm has remained in the same family for more than 100 years, passing through four generations. This has maintained continuity in the preservation of the buildings and the oral history associated with them. The property retains its original purpose as a working farm, contributing to its historical significance. The barn is an outstanding example of rural architecture and craftsmanship.

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Mohr Barn  
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Sedgwick County, Kansas  
County and State

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Ford, Susan Jezak. Activity III Report, Michial Mohr Farmstead (Property #6) Sedgwick County. Kansas Department of Transportation, Environmental Services Section, Project No. 87 K-8263-01 CMS: 006044020. June 4, 2004

Harvesters of the Prairie, St. Mark 1875-1975. North Newton, KS: Mennonite Press, 1977.

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Mohr Barn  
Name of property

Sedgwick County, Kansas  
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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nominated property is located 1.4 miles west of Wichita city limit on West 21<sup>st</sup> Street North. The legal description of the property is the S1/4 EXC N 124 FT S 518.4 FT E 100 FT W 793 FT & EXC 21<sup>st</sup> ST on S SEC 2-27-2W

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

Although this barn is part of an entire farmstead, only the livestock barn is being nominated at the request of the owner.

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

Kathy L. Morgan, Photographer  
Date of Photographs: March 12, 2004

1. North elevation looking south
2. East elevation looking west
3. Metal turbine detail looking southeast
4. Flooring and joist detail looking south
5. Grain storage looking west
6. Interior room framing detail looking north
7. Spiral stair looking north



GODDARD QUADRANGLE  
KANSAS—SEDGWICK CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6559 IV SW  
(MAIZE)



Zone 14  
E630961  
4176 N4176058





